



To Senator Moore, Representative Abercrombie and esteemed members of the Human Services Committee

Testimony in support of HB 5334, AN ACT CONCERNING A STUDY OF LONG-TERM CARE NEEDS

The Agencies on Aging - CT support HB 5334, an Act Concerning a Study of Long-Term Care Needs. The Study can influence new Medicaid Waiver programs or PACE program initiatives designed to support residents' long-term care needs. A Study may promote a more holistic view of aging in place that includes support for social determinants that pose barriers to community living. The Study may recommend greater alignment between programs administered by the Department of Social Services with Programs funded by the Older Americans Act and the Aging & Disability Services Department. This alignment would result in a safety net for Connecticut residents in need of immediate supports while awaiting a Medicaid eligibility decision. The Connecticut Agencies on Aging look forward to supporting the work of the Study if approved.

Testimony in support of Raised House Bill 5338, AN ACT CONCERNING INCREASING THE RATE OF MEDICAID REIMBURSEMENT FOR HOME CARE SERVICES.

The Agencies on Aging - CT support HB 5338, An Act Concerning Increasing the Rate of Medicaid Reimbursement for Home Care Services with the following considerations. First, all rates for home health and other, community-based long-term care services should be level set in 2023 given the increased expense of minimum wage and pandemic related supplies. Once fair and equitable reimbursement is established, an annual review and potential increase based on the cost of living for urban consumers may be the right tool to make an adjustment. The Agencies on Aging suggest that additional research be done to confirm the efficacy of tying future increases to the cost of living for urban consumers. External factors like the annual increase in minimum

wage should also be considered. Connecticut's Medicaid Long-Term Care Providers offer critical services to numerous populations through Medicaid waivers for persons with disabilities, Acquired or Traumatic Brain Injuries, Mental Health and Addiction, Autism, etc. The Providers for *all* Medicaid waivers, not just the CT Home Care Program for Elders, should be included in the annual reimbursement rate review and adjustment.

Testimony in support of HB 5339, AN ACT EXPANDING ACCESS TO THE CONNECTICUT HOME-CARE PROGRAM FOR THE ELDERLY.

The Agencies on Aging - CT support HB 5339, An Act Expanding Access to the Connecticut Home Care Program for the Elderly. An increase in the maximum allowable assets to \$45,000 (single) and \$65,000 (couple) will open home & community-based options to more low-income seniors at-risk of nursing home placement. The CT Home Care Program for Elders offers seniors a safe, strategic method of spending down assets to Medicaid eligibility and allows the individual to get long-term care services in a community setting. This results in savings to the State when the community services prevent premature institutional placement while keeping the individual in their own home. An increase in the maximum allowable assets provides additional economic security for clients. The additional assets can be used to pay unscheduled bills like home repairs, vehicle repairs and dental expenses. The CT Home Care Programs offer Connecticut residents essential long-term care services in the care setting of their choice while overall Medicaid expenditures.

This testimony is submitted by Marie Allen, President Southwestern CT Agency on Aging on behalf of Connecticut's five regional Area Agencies on Aging (C4A). The Agencies on Aging represent individuals in every Connecticut city and town and are the "point of entry" for older adults, persons with disabilities and caregivers in need of assistance navigating and enrolling in local, State and Federal services.